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Fears of Losing Insurance Prompt Some Truckers to Leave Weeks-Long Protest

BY KATHERINE FUNG ON 2/18/22 AT 1:42 PM EST



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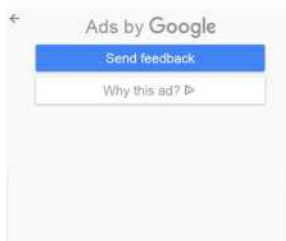
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After demonstrating for three weeks, some truckers are beginning to leave anti-COVID mandate protests across Canada over fears that the federal government might revoke their insurance—a move that could make it difficult for these drivers to ever work again.

Earlier this week, Prime Minister [Justin Trudeau](#) brought insurance companies into the ongoing conflict, asking insurers to suspend coverage on trucks and vehicles used in the blockades, when he enacted the Emergencies Act.

"We are today serving notice: if your truck is being used in these illegal blockades, your corporate accounts will be frozen. The insurance on your vehicle will be suspended," Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland said on Monday. "Send your semi-trailers home."



As banks began freezing accounts of protesters and their supporters on Thursday, some truckers began leaving the protests after the government's latest announcement out of concerns that auto insurance may be suspended soon as well.

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On Thursday, [Eric Mueller](#), a key trucker figure in the demonstrations in Ottawa, drove away from the Fairmont Chateau Laurier in his Load Safe truck after spending 20 days in the nation's capital protesting the federal government's vaccine mandate for cross-border truck drivers, [social media posts show](#).

The only truck to leave is shown in this video. Driver's name is Erik. He left to save 55 families as they threatened LOADSAFE with shutting down bank and insurance for entire company.

Erik had quit but the company name was still on his truck. Erik was there 20 days. HERO! [pic.twitter.com/ocSOaf9nzg](#)

— Canadian Cryptonaire - Passionate about Freedom! (@CCryptonaire) February 18, 2022



Rich Russell, the owner of shipping company Load Safe, told the *Toronto Star* that he risked losing his entire company because one independent owner-operator employed by Russell was part of the Freedom Convoy.

He said that his insurance company had informed him that the insurance of the entire fleet could be suspended and the company bank account frozen due to the one driver's involvement with the protests.

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Russell, who has not been involved with the demonstrations, did not name the driver but said they finally left their parking spot outside a hotel after Russell pleaded with him to do so.



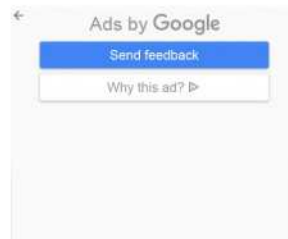
"The insurance on your vehicle will be suspended," Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland warned trucker protesters on Monday. Trucks block a street in front of Parliament Hill during the protest against Covid-19 mandates, in Ottawa on February 18, 2022.

ANREJ IVANOV/AFP

Insurance-related fears have also pushed out truckers in Alberta, who had been blocking a border crossing between the community of Coutts and Sweet Grass, Montana.

Corporal Gina Slaney of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police told *Fortune* on Tuesday that demonstrators were beginning to leave after hearing of the news that the federal government was imposing new and sweeping action against protesters.

"A lot of grown men were crying," trucker Jake Klassen told the outlet. "We didn't think [Trudeau] was going to enact that. We could lose everything."

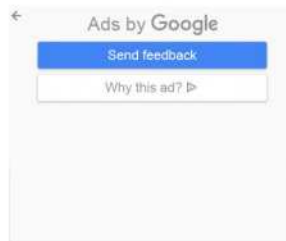


While the broadened powers under the Emergencies Act seem to be doing more to quell the protests in Canada, some have warned that taking away insurance is not the best solution.

"I think as a government it would be bonkers," Queen's University law professor Erik Knutsen told the CBC last week. "If you yank insurance coverage and the person that did something, that hurt somebody, in one of these gatherings has no assets, it doesn't hurt the wrongdoer. It's hurting the victim."

"If that trucker didn't have a policy, and the pedestrian didn't have a policy to claim on, what would happen in that situation?" Bryan Yetman, president at First Durham Insurance, told *Canadian Underwriter*. "Having people who aren't really clear as to whether they're covered or not driving around doesn't seem like a particularly good idea."

Ottawa police are expected to crack down on protesters in the downtown core and other parts of Ottawa on Friday afternoon, prompting the House of Commons' to cancel its sitting to take up debate on Trudeau's emergency powers.



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I think that trucker protestors should consider the possible consequences if they use their trucks to block roadways and bridges. Protesting by carrying signs, refusing to leave, etc. is certainly allowed, but disrupting the ability of people who are not part of your protest to conduct business goes **See more**

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nemesi omnibus malis

19 February, 2022

What happened to their high idealism when their pocketbooks are threatened?

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cclaxton

18 February, 2022

Coercion by threats of cancellation, doxxing, pulling licenses, pulling insurance, etc. are all McCarthyism. Cancel culture is McCarthyism. It must stop. It is propaganda taken into mob action.

We all need to learn how to distinguish between the truth and propaganda. It's not hard to learn how to s... **See more** (Edited)

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Nancy Present

21 February, 2022

I don't think it is that simple-- if a person who owns his truck loses his insurance, and no one will insure him, the truck cannot legally be on the road. He loses his ability to make a living.

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cclaxton

18 February, 2022

There is a difference between being fired for not taking a vaccination shot and choosing to leave. The whole point is that no one should be fired for their political views or their advocacy as long as it doesn't conflict with their work. Certain public-facing jobs such as Public Relations, Sales, **See more**

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bwana4swahili

19 February, 2022

"the federal government might revoke their insurance—a move that could make it difficult for these drivers to ever work again"

Would serve the 'Convoy of Fools' right! Nothing accomplished but a waste of diesel fuel.

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Pat Dorsey

19 February, 2022

I wonder if those drivers own their trucks. If so, that is \$100,000+ down the drain.

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1 reply



grinning libber

19 February, 2022

Insurance heck. Arrest them, take their license, impound the trucks and auction them

Reply · 18 · 11 · Share



Ja

18 February, 2022

Maybe the truckers should just go on strike instead?

Reply · 5 · 4 · Share



grinning libber

19 February, 2022

It's a small minority - they would not be missed.

Reply · 12 · 6 · Share

1 reply



Emmanuel Goldst

18 February, 2022

Yep, true Fascism on parade.

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Sly

19 February, 2022

It seems enlightened Canada is just a thinly veiled dictatorship. When the going gets inconvenient, the true nature of the liberals is revealed.

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I guess you can't tell the difference between true discourse and having a mob take over the streets. Take a trip to Moscow and yell out "Putin must go". Don't bother buying a round trip ticket, you'll never get to use it.

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